

KEHOE'S CORNER

News from the office of Senator Kristine Kehoe



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Committees

Local Government, Chair
Budget and Fiscal Review
Energy, Utilities
and Communications

Natural Resources & Water
Transportation & Housing
Joint Committee on
Homeland Security and
Emergency Services, Chair

Legislative Update

The Legislature has adjourned for the year, and I am pleased to report that several of my bills have been passed into law.

Each legislative session, my main focus is to develop and support sound policies that make the lives of San Diegans and Californians better. I have done that this year with the passage of measures that better protect homeowners, enable more students to take advantage of state-funded after-school programs, improve energy efficiency, provide financial relief to counties affected by last year's rain-storms, and more. Here are summaries of some of these bills.

Providing Emergency Relief to San Diego— SB 457:

This measure provides financial relief to the counties of San Diego, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino for the costs incurred in dealing with this past winter's storms. These four counties were declared disaster areas by both the state and federal governments as a result of the series of devastating storms and their aftermath. SB 457 provides financial relief to the counties and protects the services that the local governments provide by reimbursing them for associated costs.

This new law will reimburse the counties for lost property tax revenues that will result from the reduced property value due to damage caused by the storms. It also reimburses each of these counties for the costs that the local governments incurred in responding to these disasters. Finally, it gives businesses and individuals tax protection against losses they suffered, and allows homeowners to continue to qualify for the homeowner's exemption for properties that were damaged or destroyed by these storms even though they aren't living in the homes while they are being repaired or replaced.

SB 457 contained an urgency clause and became effective upon the Governor's signature.

Homeowners' Insurance Protection – SB 518:

This measure was a direct result of the 2003 wildfires when many San Diego homeowners were not only devastated by the fires, but also by inadequate insurance policies and practices. Senate Bill 518 protects California's insured homeowners in the event of a state of emergency in which their home is damaged or destroyed, by granting them up to 24 months of additional living expenses (the money used to pay for temporary housing) while their homes are being repaired or rebuilt.

In a state of emergency, such as the October 2003 fires during which large numbers of homes are affected, the construction industry is often unable to rebuild homes within 12 months. A 12-month insurance industry standard is not enough in such cases.

Additionally, SB 518 provides enhanced consumer protection and oversight by creating new regulations overseen by the Department of Insurance, and clarifying that all policyholders have a right to receive a copy of their homeowner's insurance policy within 30 days of making a request.

Legislative Update continued on page 2

Highlights:

Legislative update	1
Redevelopment	3
Disaster Preparedness	3
Special Election	4
Free Brochures	4

Legislative update – continued from front page

After School Education and Safety Programs - SB 707:

Senate Bill 707 allows the state-funded After School Education and Safety Programs (ASESP), which are often held at public schools before and after class, to run more efficiently and better serve the community by giving the program greater flexibility on attendance-based funding requirements. In San Diego, the 6-to-6 Program will directly benefit from this legislation.

SB 707 allows before and after school programs the flexibility to establish and enforce late arrival and early release policies for special circumstances, eases funding restraints and waiting lists by allowing ASEP grant recipients to move funds among program sites, and creates a remedy for ASEP programs to recoup lost funds resulting from emergency school closures.

This measure will allow before and after school operators to better serve the kids in our communities by strengthening their ability to cater directly to the needs of students and parents.

SB 707, Chapter 553 of the statutes of 2005, will take effect January 1, 2006.

Energy Efficiency – SB 1037:

Senate Bill 1037 will protect California's environment by ensuring that the state meets its future energy needs with a particular emphasis on promoting energy efficiency.

SB 1037 requires that both the state's investor-owned utilities and locally-owned power providers help meet the state's power needs through energy efficiency and demand reduction resources that include energy efficient lights and appliances and programs that emphasize using less energy or doing tasks at off-peak hours when energy is in less demand. The new law also requires natural gas corporations to have similar policies in place. The California Public Utilities Commission will be required to work with the California Energy Commission to identify efficiency savings and establish efficiency targets.

In order for California to continue to grow and prosper, we need ample sources of energy to power the state. By focusing on resources that are both cost-effective and energy efficient, the state will save money while also offsetting the need to build large power plants. This measure furthers our state's ongoing commitment to pursuing reliable and more cost-effective energy, while working to preserve one of California's greatest attributes, our environment.

SB 1037, Chapter 366, Statutes of 2005, will take effect January 1, 2006.

Information on Legislation

Get detailed information on any of my bills by going to my website at www.senate.ca.gov/Kehoe and clicking on the bill number. By doing this, you will have access to the bill language, who voted for or against the measure, and the status of each measure.



Senator Kehoe talks about energy efficiency at a solar event in spring 2005

"Redevelopment and Blight" Hearing in San Diego

In an effort to protect California neighborhoods and homeowners, I am hosting a hearing in San Diego on redevelopment. As Chair of the Senate Local Government Committee, this issue is very important to me.

The purpose of the hearing is to explore neighborhood redevelopment, what constitutes physical and economic blight, and the use of eminent domain.

The public is encouraged to attend and make comments.

WHEN - 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm, Oct. 26, 2005

WHERE - Weingart City Heights Library

3795 Fairmount Avenue, San Diego.

Upstairs meeting room.

WHO:

- Senator Christine Kehoe, Chair, Senate Local Government Committee
- Senator Tom Torlakson, Chair, Senate Transportation & Housing Committee
- Assemblymember Gene Mullin, Chair, Assembly Housing & Community Development
- Assemblymember Simón Salinas, Chair, Assembly Local Government Committee
- Panelists and Public Comment

For more information on this hearing, call my office at (619) 645-3133 or email me at Senator.Kehoe@sen.ca.gov.

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Is California Prepared for *The Big One*: Earthquake, Tsunami, Wildfire, Flood, an Act of Terrorism?

Emergency Services and Homeland Security Committee to explore state's level of preparedness at upcoming hearings

I have been appointed to chair the Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security.

The Joint Committee is an investigatory committee for the legislature, with specified membership from each house.

The Committee will hold hearings throughout the state to determine the state's preparedness for both natural and man-made disasters. Its powers include providing a public forum for

discussion of California's emergency services and homeland security issues, making recommendations as to legislation and forming technical advisory committees to assist it in carrying out its duties.

The Joint Committee held its first hearing, ***Is California Prepared for The Big One: Earthquake, Tsunami, Wildfire, Flood, an Act of Terrorism?***, in October 2005. Future hearings will be held November 9th in San Diego to review the

state's preparedness for wildfires in the wake of the 2003 firestorms, and December 5th in San Francisco to discuss homeland security and the level of preparedness in place for our state's emergency medical services.

For more information on any of these issues, call (916) 651-4039.



Senator Kehoe (center) hosts Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security hearing in 2004

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Committee Assignments

- Local Government, Chair
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and Communications
- Natural Resources & Water
- Transportation & Housing
- Joint Committee on
Homeland Security
and Emergency
Services, Chair

Balboa Park's Japanese Garden celebrates 90 years

The Japanese Friendship Garden recently celebrated their 90th anniversary, and I had the honor of attending the ceremony and presenting a Senate Resolution. As a Legislator representing the park, it is my honor to advocate for the park and its institutions, and to support the park and help it maintain its prominence in San Diego history and in the fabric of our daily living.

The Japanese Friendship Garden is an integral part of Balboa Park's culture, beauty and splendor, and deserves to be recognized for its contribution to our city.

Congratulations, and here's to another 90 years!



Senator Kehoe at the groundbreaking of the Japanese Friendship Garden expansion ceremony

Important information for upcoming Special Election

The Special Statewide Election which will be held on November 8 is quickly approaching. If you would like to learn more about the propositions or who the candidates are, the San Diego County Registrar of Voters' website has a variety of helpful services and information, including:

- Important Dates
- Absentee Ballot Request
- View a sample ballot
- Find Your Polling Place
- Statewide Proposition Text
- Candidate List

To access the Registrar of Voters' website, go to www.sdvote.com.

Brochures and California Constitution books free from my office

Various brochures as well as booklets containing the California Constitution are now available from my office. Brochure topics include:

- Medi-Cal Senior Fact Sheet
- Veterans Resource Guide
- Identity Theft
- Prescription Drug Discount Program for Medicare Recipients
- A Citizen's Guide to Lobbying

If you would like a free copy of any of these publications, please contact my office at (619) 645-3133 or Senator.Kehoe@sen.ca.gov.